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IN THE MAGAZINES

The June magazines are not prolific in art interest, but present some specially notable articles. In the *Century*, William M. Chase, under the super-scription "The Two Whistlers," recounts, delightfully, recollections of a summer with the greater etcher. "There were two distinct sides to Whistler," he says, "each one of which he made famous. One was Whistler in public—the fop, the cynic, the brilliant, flippant, vain and careless idler; the other was Whistler of the studio, the earnest, tireless, sober worker, a very slave to his art, a bitter foe to all pretense and sham, an embodiment of simplicity almost to the point of diffidence, an incarnation of earnestness and sincerity of purpose." Mr. Chase describes this dual personality with clearness and precision, drawing in words a striking portrait of Whistler the genius. In the same magazine a brief but interesting account of René Gilbert, a French artist who has won much distinction as a pastelist, is given, together with four reproductions of his work. The *Scribner's*, in the Field of Art, publishes a short illustrated article on "The Art of the Book-Plate," by Frank Weitenkampf, Curator of Prints in the New York Public Library; and, in the body of the magazine, an alluring description of "Skagen, the Danish Painters' Village in Jutland," by Edith Rickert. An article entitled "A Certain Criticism of Art in America" is contributed to the *North American Review* by Charles H. Caffin, who finds himself in agreement with Gutzon-Borglum in regard to the lack of "reverence, sincerity, and individuality" in the current art of this country. The cause of this condition, he states, is submersion in "machines political, commercial, and social." Possibly the warning is timely, but Mr. Caffin seems to confuse New York with America. "The Architecture of New York's City Colleges," the fourth paper of a series, by Montgomery Schuyler, is the leading article in the June issue of the *Architectural Record*, and goes to show that New York at least can boast of some fine

buildings within this category—buildings designed with apparent sincerity and calculated to inspire reverence. The leading article in the *International Studio* is on the work of J. Q. A. Ward by William Walton—a tribute well deserved. In the English section of special interest is an illustrated article by Henri Frantz on Harpignies's charcoal drawings. In *The American Architect* of June 8th is found a significant article on "The Decorative Possibilities of the Small Bronze Figure," by J. Scott Hartley, Secretary of the National Sculpture Society. "The Use of Flowers in Education" is the subject of an excellent paper contributed to *The School Arts Book* by John Cotton Dana; and in *The American City* is noted an article of special interest on "New Street Lighting," by E. Leavenworth Elliott. Recent numbers of *L'Art et les Artistes* contain some extremely interesting and well illustrated articles—Auguste Rodin's prose poem on the Venus de Milo, for example,—a hymn of praise to this masterpiece of Grecian Art. An appreciation of the work of George Desvallieres will prove of interest to those who have read his ardent defence of Henri Matisse. An article by Arsène Alexandre on Maurice Denis "un peintre mystique au XXth siècle" reveals a new note among the French decorators.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN ART. BY JULIUS MEIER-GRAEFE (with over two hundred illustrations). Translated from the German by Florence Simmonds and George W. Chrystal. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York.

There are a few rare books on art which may be called "illuminating," inasmuch as they enable us to perceive new beauty in many things. We do not necessarily agree with the writers, very often we distinctly disagree, as with some of the opinions held by Meier-Graefe in his profoundly suggestive work, *The Development of Modern Art*; not one of the most recent publications but of continuing interest.

A German Agnostic, he sweeps aside

all religious faith, while acknowledging that every great art period has been created by religion and that, so far, no substitute has been found to provide "that universal interest which can alone make art universal" and produce "that ideal interdependence of all artistic activities which made art the possession of the whole people, enabling them to understand and to love it. * * *

Once the symbol of the holiest, diffusing reverence in the church and standing above mankind like the Divinity itself, the picture has become the diversion of an idle moment * * * the worshippers of old, idle chatters. * * *

In the interior of St. Mark's criticism is dumb. * * *

We do not see this golden magnificence—we hear it, feel it, breathe it," and even while relegating this art to a barbaric past, he exclaims: "What would we not give if such emotion sometimes overcame us in the presence of modern decoration!"

The temple raised by early Italian and Gothic art having become untenable, we are shown the evolution through which art has since passed and the efforts of our revolutionary moderns to reconstruct an esthetic world for man's refreshment.

As to painting, he declares that "the whole sum of modern art is manufactured out of Rubens and Velasquez."

Recognizing that Paris is the capital of art, "a fact not to be gainsaid by patriotic feeling," he ascribes to the French Impressionists the glory of founding the new temple. "Four mighty columns bear it aloft—Manet, Degas, Cézanne, Renoir." Other names are suggested that might be added, notably Claude Manet, "the most vital of contemporary masters." He does not include Puvis de Chavannes because "Puvis built himself a temple of his own."

His summing up of the work of these men, of their contribution to modern painting, is a masterly piece of constructive criticism, in which he shows these long-reputed realists to be idealists of the subtlest order; and that while nature has always been their inspiration, they never became her servile copyists. De-

scribing a flower study by Manet, he says: "Any one who cares for flowers at all will feel a hitherto untouched chord vibrating in his soul * * * perfume, motion, is lacking, and yet there is something here of which he scarcely dreamed, or perhaps dimly wished for in the natural blossom; a charm that conquers mortal fragility. * * *

Here the eyes feel no fatigue and the understanding also seems to rest. * * *

The art of all the glorious tradition inaugurated by Manet lies in a profound grasp of some small bit of life."

But beneath his boundless admiration for the Impressionist-innovators, not only in France but in every European country, one is conscious of a lurking doubt as to the ultimate good of their artistic achievements. "The play of light in itself * * * is meaningless. Light is of use to us only if it light something," and again "this art * * * does it point upwards, will these mighty fragments weld themselves together into a great homogeneous force, gaining fresh strength from itself without going back to the ancient springs? That is the question"—for "all art which serves the higher interests of culture is a language of form * * * which shall materialize the noblest impulses of the present and perpetuate those of the past" and "only new practical purposes, mightier than those Michelangelo obeyed, can make sculpture plastic again."

Yet withal he believes that something great must eventually evolve from the general unrest which is forcing artists to throw off old traditions and strike out in new paths. "The logical sequence seems so assured. We can hardly doubt a happy issue."

This remarkable book is written with an enthusiasm that carries the reader to the very end of the two large volumes. Its value lies in its suggestiveness, and the fact that the author possesses a profound knowledge of his subject combined with the power to grasp it as a whole; to group the men of different tendencies, to show their interdependence one on another and the evolution of their art from that of past ages.